

# **Exhibit 3**

**CERTIFICATION OF PROPOSED LEAD PLAINTIFF  
PURSUANT TO FEDERAL SECURITIES LAWS**

THE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION OF NEW MEXICO ("PERA")  
declares the following as to the claims asserted, or to be asserted, under the federal securities laws:

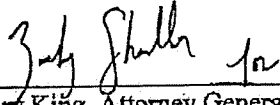
1. I, Gary King, am the Attorney General and chief legal officer for the State of New Mexico. I am statutorily authorized to represent the PERA in this litigation against Sterling Financial Corporation ("Sterling") and the other defendants. As chief legal officer for the state of New Mexico, I designate Cauley Bowman Carney & Williams, PLLC as counsel for the PERA in this action for all purposes.
2. I have reviewed the complaint against Sterling.
3. The PERA did not acquire Sterling stock at the direction of plaintiff's counsel or in order to participate in any private action under the federal securities laws.
4. The PERA is willing to serve as a lead plaintiff either individually or as part of a group. A lead plaintiff is a representative party who acts on behalf of other class members in directing the action, and whose duties may include testifying at deposition and trial.
5. The PERA will not accept any payment for serving as a representative party beyond its pro rata share of any recovery, except reasonable costs and expenses, such as lost wages and travel expenses, directly related to the class representation, as ordered or approved by the court pursuant to law.
6. The PERA has been appointed to serve as a representative party for a class in the following actions under the federal securities laws within the past three years: *In re BISYS Securities Litigation* and *St. Paul Travelers Securities Litigation*.
7. The PERA initially sought to serve as a representative party for a class in the following actions under the federal securities laws, but either withdrew its application or its application was denied in favor of other investors with more significant losses: *Royal Dutch/Shell Securities Litigation* and *In re Hansen Natural Corporation Securities Litigation*.
8. PERA understands that this is not a claim form, and that its ability to share in any recovery as a member of the class is unaffected by its decision to serve as a representative party.

9. The PERA's transactions in Sterling that are the subject to this action are set forth below;

No. of Shares	Buy/Sell	Date	Price Per Share
e attached schedule			

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 24<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2007.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary King, Attorney General for the  
State of New Mexico  
By: Zachary Shandler, Assistant Attorney General

## Sterling Financial Corp NMPERA Damages

Avg. closing price for shares held 90 days after the class period:									
Class Period: 04/27/2004 - 05/24/2007    Avg closing price: 05/25/07 - 07/23/07 (90 Day Max = 08/22/07)									
\$10.8213									
Account No.	Account Name	Shares Bought			Shares Sold			Total Gain/Loss	
		Date	# of Shares	\$ Per Share	Date	# of Shares	\$ Per Share		
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	8/8/2006	13,700	\$21.4880				(\$294,385.60)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	8/9/2006	8,600	\$21.7450				(\$187,007.00)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	8/23/2006	10,700	\$21.7800				(\$233,046.00)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	9/8/2006	1,400	\$21.4899				(\$30,085.86)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	9/11/2006	1,500	\$21.5189				(\$32,278.35)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	9/12/2006	200	\$21.6550				(\$4,331.00)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	9/13/2006	600	\$21.8000				(\$13,080.00)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	9/15/2006	700	\$22.0000				(\$15,400.00)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	9/18/2006	400	\$22.0000				(\$8,800.00)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	9/29/2006	6,600	\$21.9800				(\$145,068.00)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	11/28/2006	3,840	\$22.6990				(\$87,164.16)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	12/1/2006	180	\$22.4400				(\$4,039.20)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	12/7/2006	5,340	\$23.2260				(\$124,026.84)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	12/8/2006	3,120	\$23.2810				(\$72,636.72)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL	2/28/2007	3,720	\$21.4960				(\$79,965.12)	
NM2622712	*NMPERA - ROTHCHILD -SL				6/25/2004	2,300	\$24.4270	\$56,182.10	
NM2622719	*NMPERA STATE ST RUSSELL -SL							(\$80,092.60)	
NM2622719	*NMPERA STATE ST RUSSELL -SL	6/24/2005	3,800	\$21.0770				\$672,002.73	
	NMPERA				Held	62,100	\$10.8213		
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**CERTIFICATION OF PROPOSED LEAD PLAINTIFF  
PURSUANT TO FEDERAL SECURITIES LAWS**

NEW MEXICO EDUCATIONAL RETIREMENT BOARD ("ERB") declares the following as to the claims asserted, or to be asserted, under the federal securities laws:

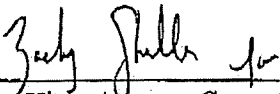
1. I, Gary King, am the Attorney General and chief legal officer for the State of New Mexico. I am statutorily authorized to represent the ERB in this litigation against Sterling Financial Corporation ("Sterling") and the other defendants. As chief legal officer for the state of New Mexico, I designate Cauley Bowman Carney & Williams, PLLC as counsel for the ERB in this action for all purposes.
2. I have reviewed the complaint against Sterling.
3. The ERB did not acquire Sterling stock at the direction of plaintiff's counsel or in order to participate in any private action under the federal securities laws.
4. The ERB is willing to serve as a lead plaintiff either individually or as part of a group. A lead plaintiff is a representative party who acts on behalf of other class members in directing the action, and whose duties may include testifying at deposition and trial.
5. The ERB will not accept any payment for serving as a representative party beyond its pro rata share of any recovery, except reasonable costs and expenses, such as lost wages and travel expenses, directly related to the class representation, as ordered or approved by the court pursuant to law.
6. The ERB has been appointed to serve as a representative party for a class in the following actions under the federal securities laws within the past three years: *In re BISYS Securities Litigation*, *HealthSouth Securities Litigation*, and *St. Paul Travelers Securities Litigation*.
7. The ERB initially sought to serve as a representative party for a class in the following actions under the federal securities laws, but either withdrew its application or its application was denied in favor of other investors with more significant losses: *Royal Dutch/Shell Securities Litigation*.
8. ERB understands that this is not a claim form, and that its ability to share in any recovery as a member of the class is unaffected by its decision to serve as a representative party.

9. The ERB's transactions in Sterling that are the subject to this action are set forth below:

No. of Shares	Buy/Sell	Date	Price Per Share
e attached schedule			

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 24<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2007.

  
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Gary King, Attorney General for the  
State of New Mexico  
By: Zachary Shandler, Assistant Attorney General

# Sterling Financial Corp NMERB Damages

[illegible]